

OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILES AND WORK FOLDERS

1. PURPOSE

This Directive describes the Official Personnel File (OPF) and the Work Folder (WF) maintained in APHIS.

2. OFFICIAL PERSONNEL FILE

Executive Order 10561 states that the OPF is a part of the records of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), both during Federal employment and after separation. The OPF is the official depository for records and reports of personnel actions taken on an employee. These records and reports give legal force and effect to such actions and establish employee rights and benefits under law and regulations.

A. Contents.

- (1) Permanent. All records affecting an employee's status and service are filed on the right, or permanent side. CSC designates the papers and documents which must be filed. See Attachment (1). No other papers or records can be filed on the permanent side.
- (2) Temporary. Papers leading to formal action, but not constituting a record of it or making a substantial contribution to the record, are filed on the left or temporary side. Contents vary in individual cases. Examples are:
 - a. Requests for personnel actions.
 - b. Letters of decision denying a within-grade increase.
 - c. Performance ratings other than Outstanding or Unsatisfactory.
 - d. Reduction-in-force notices.
 - e. Correspondence relating to the employee.

B. Retention.

- (1) Permanent Material. All material on the right, or permanent side, is retained by the employing agency until the employee is separated from Federal service. At the time the OPF, containing the permanent material only, must be sent to the National Personnel Records Center (a central file of all former Federal employees).
- (2) Temporary Material.
 - a. Minimum Period. Such material must be retained in the OPF for a minimum period of one year, or until the employee transfers to another federal agency or is separated from the Federal service (whichever occurs first).
 - b. Maximum Period. Such material may be retained in the OPF for as long as the employee remains in the

Department.

C. Prohibited Filings. Material shown below cannot be filed in the OPF:

- (1) Photographs.
- (2) Notations of race, color, religion, or national origin.
- (3) "FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" records pertaining to:
 - a. Disciplinary matters and suitability for employment. (Destroyed at the end of three years.)
 - b. Complaints, grievances, debt cases, fair employment cases, and performance rating cases. (Destroyed at the end of three years after case is settled.)
 - c. Performance rating appeals. (Destroyed 10 years after close of case except for performance rating cases and discrimination appeal cases.)

"FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY" records will be kept in a separate secured file by the SPO, PD, or offices authorized to maintain WF's for the authorized retention period..

3. WORK FOLDER

- A. Authorization. CSC authorizes one WF for each employee to be maintained at no more than one level in the Agency. In APHIS, the level authorized to maintain WF's is shown below. This authority may not be redelegated:
- (1) MPI - Regional Office, Compliance Area Office, Training Staff
 - (2) VS - Area Office
 - (3) PPQ - Regional Office
 - (4) For employees of field laboratories and offices which report directly to headquarters - Field laboratory or office involved.
- B. Use of Form SF-66, Official Personnel Folder, Prohibited. Use of SF-66 for the WF is prohibited.
- C. Contents. Limited to the following kinds of materials:
- (1) Information on experience, education, training, special qualifications, skills, and conduct.
 - (2) Position descriptions.
 - (3) Performance appraisals.
- D. Prohibited Filings. Filing of material listed in 2.C above and documents or papers given in Attachment (1) is prohibited.
- E. Retention.
- (1) Minimum. All material must be retained for a period of one year or until the employee leaves APHIS (whichever occurs first). In cases of transfers within APHIS, the WF will

"travel" with the employee.

- (2) Maximum. Material may be kept for as long as the employee stays with APHIS. EXCEPTION: Any paper relating to the employee's conduct must be destroyed at the end of three years from date of that paper.

F. Disposal. At the end of the retention period, WF contents will be sent to the SPO. The SPO will screen WF contents against the OPF and then destroy WF contents.

4. SAFEGUARDING OPF'S AND WF'S

OPF's and WF's must be kept in file cabinets equipped with individual locks or in a room with a lock. AT THE CLOSE OF EACH WORK DAY, the file cabinets or the room must be locked. A specific individual must be assigned this task.

5. AUDIT

All OPF's and WF's are subject to audit and appraisal by PD, SPO's, Department Office of Personnel, and CSC.

/s/ John E. Carson
Acting Administrator /s/

PLEASE SEE HARD COPY OR CONTACT MSD, DOCUMENTS MANAGEMENT BRANCH, THROUGH FTS2000 ON 301-436-5524 FOR THE PAPER COPY OF THE FOLLOWING IMAGE(S):

Attachment 1
(1) Contents of OPF

DISTRIBUTION: A thru R

ORIGINATING OFFICE: HRD